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PAYNE, HARRIET. Peopledance in Midstream. (1974)  
Directed by: Miss Virginia Moomaw. Pp. 25

Peopledance in Midstream is a dance for four dancers. The central idea is, that in the midst of daily activities, people dance. The intent of the mood is one of lightheartedness and gaiety. The dance is in three sections. The first section is without accompaniment, and is a repetition by each of the four dancers of a four minute movement theme in staggered sequence. The music, a medley of piano rags from the record, "Heliotrope Bouquet", begins in section two. This section is comprised of a solo, a duet, a trio, and a group segment. The final section is a recapitulation of section one repeated in unison by the four dancers and with accompaniment. The dance begins with white lights which fade into general lighting in warm colors as the second section commences. The intensity of the lights increases until the final two minutes of the dance. At this point, the warm colors begin to fade and the dance concludes with a single white spot as the last dancer exits. The costume for each dancer is a black sleeveless leotard, black tights, a pair of striped socks, and a gathered full skirt in a gaudy print. The colors in the socks and skirts are blue, red, yellow, and green.

The process of efficiently and aesthetically amassing all of the details into the completed dance was a valuable, though demanding experience. The choreographer is concerned that the experience of the choreographic process will be actively retained as a valid part of Peopledance in Midstream.

PEOPLEDANCE IN MIDSTREAM

"

This thesis has been approved by the following committee of  
the faculty of the Graduate School at The University of North  
Carolina at Greensboro,

by

Harriet Payne

A Thesis Submitted to  
the Faculty of the Graduate School at  
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Fine Arts

Committee Members

Greensboro  
July, 1974

Approved by

Virginia Moorman  
Thesis Adviser

APPROVAL PAGE

This thesis has been approved by the following committee of  
the Faculty of the Graduate School at The University of North  
Carolina at Greensboro.

Thesis  
Adviser

Virginia Mornau

Oral Examination  
Committee Members

L. Andruaker

Chris M. Harris

Herman Whitaker

July 2, 1974  
Date of Orals

## MUSIC

Heliotrope Bouquet  
Piano Rags 1900-1970

### Arrangement of Music for Choreography

- Section I: Silence, Six Minutes
- Section II:
- A Tom Turpin, "Ragtime Nightmare March", One Minute, Eighteen Seconds
  - B Scott Joplin, "Wall Street Rag", Four Minutes, Sixteen Seconds
  - C Charles L. Roberts, "Pork and Beans", One Minute, Forty-One Seconds
- Section III: William Bolcom, "Graceful Ghost", Four Minutes, Four Seconds
- Recording: Nonesuch H-71257
- Scores: Bolcom, William. "Graceful Ghost". Edward B. Marks Music Company, 1971.
- Joplin, Scott. "Wall Street Rag". New York: Seminary Music Company, 1909.
- Roberts, Charles. "Pork and Beans". New York: Joseph W. Stern and Company, 1913.
- Turpin, Tom. "Ragtime Nightmare March". (Published under the title, "Ragtime Nightmare"). St. Louis: Robert de Yong and Company, 1900.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Grateful acknowledgment to Miss Virginia Moomaw for her advice and assistance as thesis advisor. To the three dancers, Laura Doyle, Linda Alvarez, and Amy Yopp, deep appreciation for their gift of time and energy.

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## THE PROCESS BEHIND THE DANCE

It is not possible to adequately define the creative process. The amorphous nature, the dissimilarity between each process, and the nature of the realm of the process as emanating from both conscious and pre-conscious or psychic levels precludes such a definition. Nor, is it possible for the choreographer to accurately and specifically define her process, for not only does it include characteristics listed above, more importantly, the process is of chameleon nature and would require a definition for each dance created. The choreographer found, however, certain similarities between the process leading to Peopledance in Midstream and general statements made about the creative process. Certain feelings stated by others, and certain steps in the creative process are shared by the choreographer. Those will be discussed and applied to Peopledance in Midstream.

The choreographer never wishes to imply that the process used in developing the dance was a totally unique process, as there are many characteristics which coincided with those listed by theorists on the creative process. It was only through examination and reflection that the fact of this coincidence was discovered. The choreographer does feel, however, though this is a self-evident and necessary characteristic of the creative process, that the process in its entirety is unique, that the process will never happen in quite the same manner again. To reflect back on the process seems important, more perhaps to the choreographer than anyone, and justifiably so, as the process



has become internalized in the choreographers experience "bank", while only the product, the dance, remains for those other than the choreographer. And, it is the hope of the choreographer that evidence of the process leading to Peopledance in Midstream has vanished and that the audience will view the dance with attention only to the experience of the moment. As one rationale to the reader of this paper on the personal process used in creating a dance, the following statement is offered.

Some of the reasons for attention to the creative process are practical. . . . insight into the processes of invention can increase the efficiency of almost any developing and active intelligence. (5:11)

Awareness of the process was heightened by this experience of creating Peopledance in Midstream and the tremendous importance of the process as a "creative thing" itself was impressed upon the choreographer. A fuller understanding or sensing of the nature of the creative process was experienced at the conclusion of the production during a period of reflection; this understanding was caused in part by the length of the dance, and by the length of time that it took to complete the dance. Both far exceeded those factors in dances choreographed previously. Dances choreographed prior to Peopledance in Midstream were by comparison executed so quickly, the steps in the process were condensed and intertwined to the point that examination was never attempted nor even pondered.

Concern with dances previous to this dance focused on the elements of a good dance, as stated by the choreographer, Doris Humphrey, and dance educator, Alma Hawkins. These include, in the most general

sense, design, dynamics, metakinesis, rhythm, and space. A constant awareness exists of these elements as goals when choreographing, and this awareness was very much in existence when Peopledance in Mid-stream was choreographed. This awareness of the elements of form seems to be an aspect of the refining step of conscious editing and revision which results only after material is gathered. Elements of good form cannot be applied to an idea or vision, but only at the point when the material has been organized into some recognizable form. The choreographer feels that awareness of these elements is enriched by knowing at which point attention to them must be given, and that this awareness is part of a larger process.

The process seems to be an organic scheme evolving as the dance evolves. As the process begins to grow when the first idea appears, it is not possible to consult an outside guide for what each consecutive step is to be. The alternatives arrayed before the choreographer are innumerable; the paths and directions in which the process can travel cannot be pre-determined but must emerge from the decision as it is made, or the inspiration if it happens to alight. This feeling of the open field of possibilities lessens as the dance begins to form and the dance becomes more vivid and more defined in the mind of the choreographer, and later in the visual and kinesthetic perception of the actual piece. The sense that the movement, the design, the ideas for costumes and lighting—that all of the details of the dance can become any of countless possibilities, even after definition and clarification of the form are established, is always felt by the

choreographer. The choreographer feels a sense of wonder that the completed dance emerged as it did. If, at one point during the process of choreographing the dance, a different decision had been made, a question stands in the choreographer's mind: Would the dance have become something different from the form as it finally emerged. The question is unanswerable insofar as the process will never be backed up to that point and be "rerouted" from there; scientifically, or objectively, then, the choreographer will never know whether the outcome was "unavoidable". If there is an answer to the question, it lies only on the subjective level. The choreographer feels that the pieces and parts merged into a dance which could not have become anything else.

The method for synthesizing all of the bits and pieces of ideas, movements, and intent into the completed unit, or, how to make a dance cannot be taught and in one sense can only be partially learned as it is subject to change and chance. The choreographer has learned that a solution to the problem can be possible through a combination of many kinds of approaches.

The stages of the creative process as formulated by Wallas are as follows:

1. Exposure (the collection of raw materials)
2. Incubation (unrelated parts begin to fit together)
3. Illumination (the involuntary act)
4. Execution (transforming the experience into the symbolic form). (5:61-66)

Each of these became a part of the process of Peopledance in Midstream. They did not appear in the order listed, nor was each stage completed before another began; all seemed to be intermingled. To clarify the way in which the process unfolded would be to define the process as being made up of many similarly structured subprocesses; therefore, it is difficult to distinguish concisely between each step. During the final execution stage, the stage in which the movement sequences were placed together into the completed dance, the choreographer continued to: 1. gather still new information, 2. add this information to existing information, 3. receive flashes of inspiration which also were added to the dance, while 4. consciously attempting to shape the dance as it existed and with the addition of new information. Each general stage consisted of similar subprocesses. The bombardment of ideas continued throughout the process, but it was a sporadic, sometimes illogical and unexplainable bombardment. Neither the source of all of the ideas, nor the reason that some of the ideas became a part of the dance and that some of the ideas did not, can be completely described and explained by the choreographer.

Feeling and intuition played an important part in the method for keeping or discarding ideas. A sense of "yes, this is right", was felt many times and was the sole determinant, or so it seems superficially, for keeping an idea. Specifically in dance, the intuitive feeling of "this is right", or "this feels right", must be used as a type of logic or rationale when determining movement

possibilities. Movement exploration and improvisation, the source of movement for Peopledance in Midstream was guided by the kinesi-  
 thetic sense of "this does or does not feel right". Certain factors did influence the selection of movement, factors which included the musical structure, diversity, dynamics, space usage, unity, and intent, but the origin of the actual movement came from the kinesi-  
 thetic sense of feeling.

The origin of movement is a strong example of a step in the creative process in which the mind or conscious will must concede to another source of idea or inspiration, or at least allow the domination of another source, in this case, the kinetic urge to move.

Sources of ideas for movement are not equally compatible and one will dominate over the other. At times, on the other hand, it can be said that sometimes there is a union of apparent opposites in the creation of the dance. Where feeling, sensing, and intuition determined the source and were one guide for using certain movement sequences, conscious and deliberate perseverance structured the exploration sessions. For this dance, the choreographer established a definite time and place every day in which to go and work on the movement. Whether or not ideas came, the choreographer stayed for the full session. If movement patterns were tried and did not seem to work, the tendency was for the choreographer to sit down for awhile and "think about it". It was realized that this was an escape from the actual work to be done. As movement was the desired goal, if no ideas came, the choreographer would "just keep walking around the room in circles",



in order to keep moving. This conscious effort to "keep moving" did seem helpful. But as one of the paradoxes of the process, it will also be noted that ideas for movement emerged unsolicited at a point when the choreographer was still and engaged in an activity very removed from dance. Three types of conditions existed during the search for movement: the domination of kinetic sense over conscious mental activity, a union of the conscious will and intuition, and effortless flashes of inspiration. The choreographer had to learn to gain from each of the three conditions as both controller of the process, and as a powerless receptor of an unfolding process which was not completely controllable.

The emergence of the idea or subject matter of the dance will be used as an illustration of the steps in the creative process, and the way in which these steps were intermingled during the process of this dance. The idea of the dance changed in a major way three times, and in minor ways, countless times. At first, the subject matter for the dance was to be a cycle of life shown by a group representing trees, and a group representing people. The idea was unsuccessful as it did not suggest movement, rather it was a philosophical or verbal concept. The emphasis of the choreographer changed from a mental concept to a visual image; the second subject was the visual contrast between a mass or large group of dancers, and the movements of one individual. As the choreographer became more familiar with the craft, a need was felt to limit intent to a subject that implied movement. The title appeared in a "flash" at this time; "stream" was used to mean a stream of people,

"peopledance" as a large group dance. The ideas for both subjects came from many varied sources, literature, pictures, other dances, a mime group, a discussion on visual perception--the list of sources is very long. Each idea was given form in an actual dance, but both were unsuccessful. In both dances the choreographer was "exposed" to a great amount of material and collected many ideas, bits and pieces fit together into the dance through both conscious effort and revision, and through stray pieces of inspiration. Though the four steps of the creative process had been encountered, the process was not complete. The choreographer discarded the two ideas for the dance; the only remnant which remained of the process to this point was the title, Peopledance in Midstream. From this title a new meaning came, simply that in the midst of day-to-day affairs, people dance. This idea became the idea for the final dance.

Excitement grew from the new idea and of course the bombardment of ideas started on how to complete the idea. The choreographer felt an eagerness to give a form to this idea, and sensed the feeling, "yes, I must see if I can do this". The excitement added to the overall feeling that this idea was really something that would, and had to be completed. "Among the conditions to which every inventor must submit is the necessity for patience." (5:26) This is a point, which only in afterthought, is clearly appropos to the process thus far. The only detail of the dance which existed at this point after a circuitous and lengthy path, was the idea for the dance. The elusiveness of idea or subject material is evocative of the whole sense or feeling of the



creative process in its entirety for this choreographer. It is unbelievable to the choreographer now, that so many ideas passed through and out of the mind of the choreographer, and that the dance finally emerged as it did. The fact that "the creative end is never in full sight at the beginning and that it is brought wholly into view only when the process of creation is completed." (5:21) has been cemented into the choreographer's awareness. The loose threads of experience and ways in which seemingly variant bits and pieces come together will continue to astound the choreographer.

This emphasizes the need to remain continuously attuned to experiences and sensations, within and without conscious effort, to keep the project in an "active file" in the mind, so that an experience sensed will pass through this "file" and if it is "right", it will become part of the "file". Paradoxically, it seems important to keep the "file" active, but "on a passive shelf". In other words, constant conscious effort, awareness of surroundings, and continual soundings for leads impedes realizing that ideas drift down to the choreographer's foot, while he is busily scanning the horizon.

. . . knowledge of the creative process drives us to conclude although a problem which stubbornly resists solutions by traditional means may perhaps be insoluble, the probability is rather that those means are themselves inadequate, the concepts, attitudes, and procedures employed are probably at fault and in need of being transcended in a fresh approach. (5:12)

The "polarity of logic and intuition" (11:120) is stated by Arthur Koestler as one facet of the creative process. Another characteristic of the creative process is that feeling, conscious mental

activity, and inspiration all must combine somehow as resources for the project. All of these characteristics must be accepted as part of the peculiar nature of the process of choreographing a dance.

The completed dance, Peopledance in Midstream, is an end to a process which was unique, and which will never be duplicated, but the process as an experience, will continue to influence and become a part of a new process behind the next dance.

## PHOTOGRAPHIC DATA

## Video Tape

Distance of camera to stage . . . . . twenty-five feet

Lighting . . . . . Lower studio - six florescent lights on. Upper studio - PJ spots at first three legs stage right (one spot at each leg). No spot upstage right as daylight spill from door upstage right nullified need for spot at this position. PJ spots at first three legs stage left (one spot at each leg). Two PJ spots upstage left to balance excess daylight spill upstage right.

Camera model . . . . . Sony Video Camera AVC-3200 with Sony Electronic Viewfinder AFV-3200

Lens . . . . . Wideangle Cosmocar Television Lens 12.5mm. 1:19 No. 11090

Lens setting . . . . . 2.8f (lens opening)  
Infinity (distance)

Videocorder . . . . . AV-3650 Sony Video Deck

Tape . . . . . Sony  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. V-31  
380m. 25 micron  
1.0mil. polyester  
backing

Video process . . . . . Stationary  
(one slight camera adjustment made approximately two minutes after beginning of last section to catch movement far downstage left)

Sound process . . . . . Recorded live from prepared tape through Videocorder

## COSTUMES

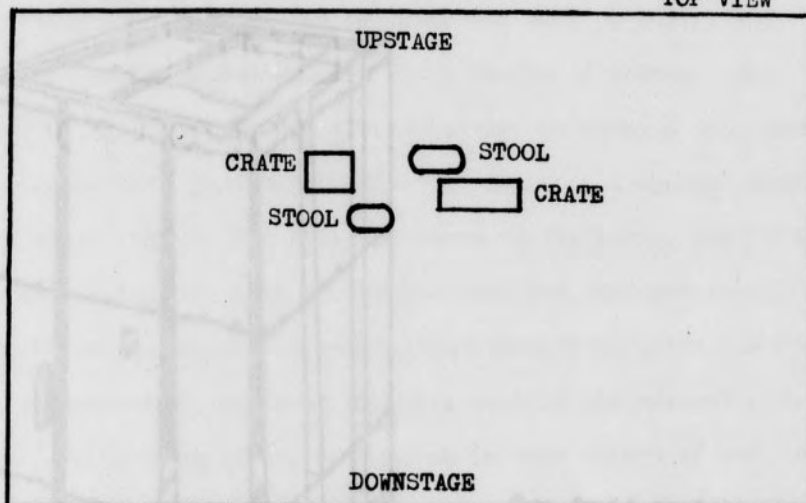
Each dancer wears a black sleeveless leotard, black tights, a pair of striped knee-length socks, and a knee-length gathered, or flared skirt in a multi-colored print. The skirts are "ragged" skirts with uneven hemlines and tucks in the material. The skirts are very full in order that the dancers can move unhindered by restricting material. The socks are different combinations of the colors, blue, red, white, and green. The heel and toe of the socks are cut out, leaving only a stirrup to prevent slipping. There are four accessories, one per dancer: a large red cloth flower, a multi-colored bow, a yellow head band, and a purple feather. The flower is attached to the front of the skirt near the right side of the waist; the headband is worn in the hair; the feather is worn at the shoulder; and the bow is attached to the skirt below the waist on the left side to material gathered in a tuck. The hair is worn in a small, tight bun on top of the head. The colors of the skirts, socks, and accessories are loud, gaudy, and do not blend. The costumes suggest a feeling that the dance characters have "been into the dress-up trunk".



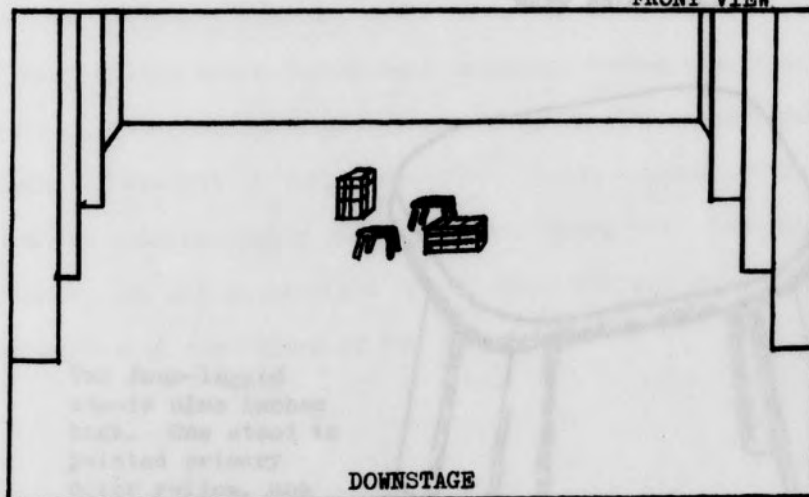


## STAGE DESIGN

TOP VIEW

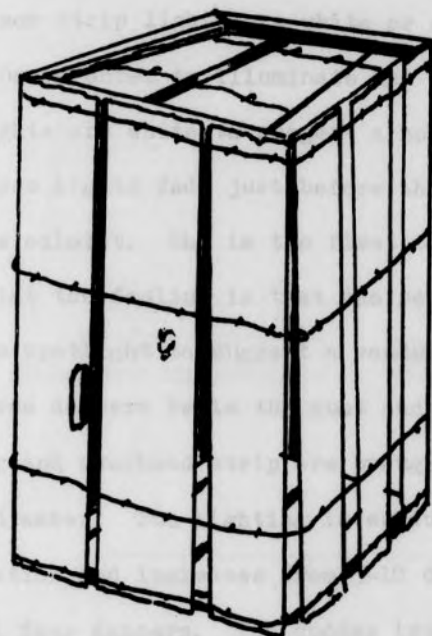


FRONT VIEW





# DETAILS OF SET PROPS



Two fruit crates, one is positioned upright, one is positioned on its side. One crate is painted primary color red, one crate is painted primary color blue.

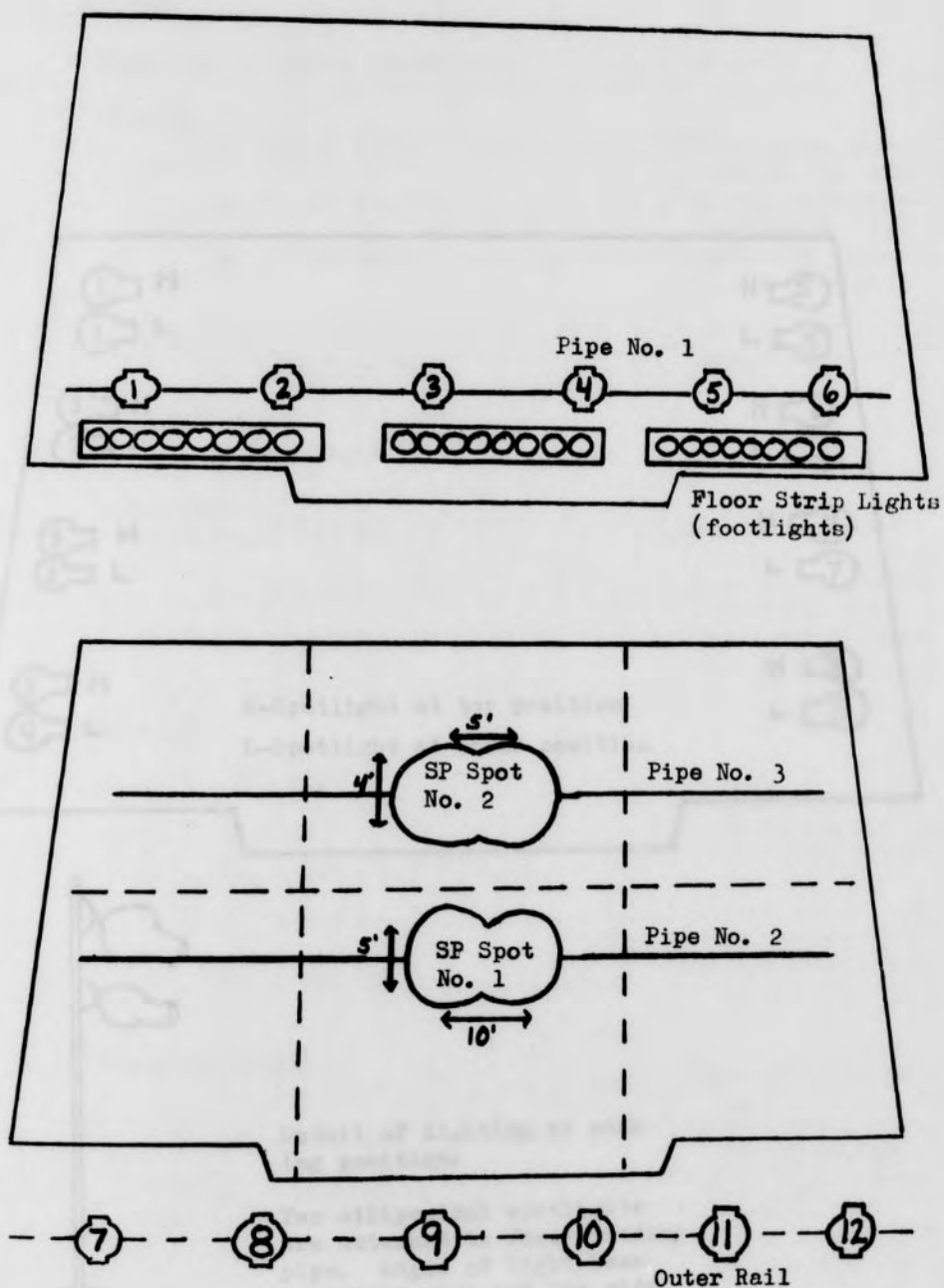


Two four-legged stools nine inches high. One stool is painted primary color yellow, one stool is painted bright emerald green.

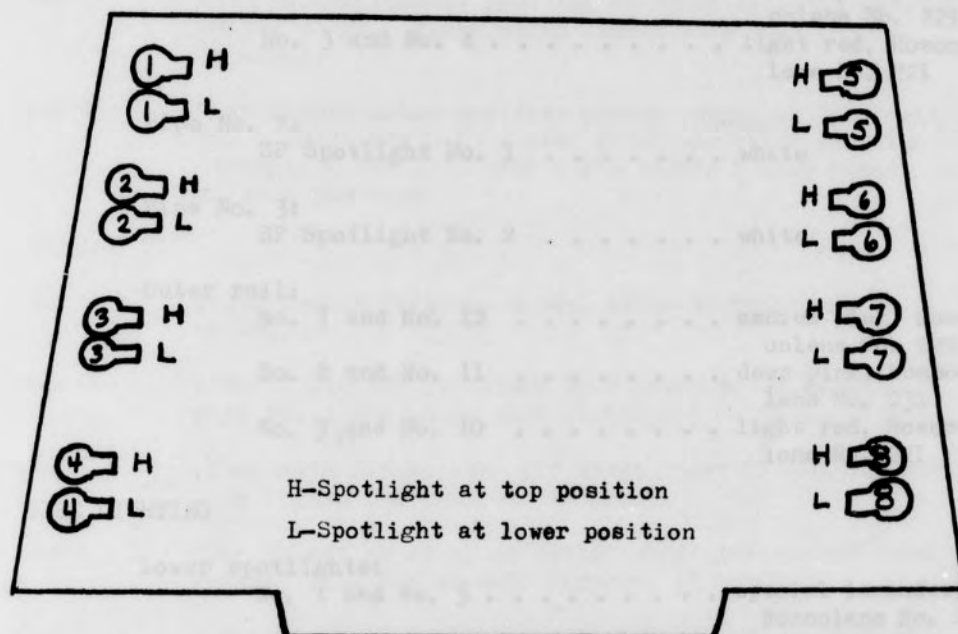
LIGHTING DESIGN  
GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The curtain opens to a completely darkened stage. The floor strip lights are white or clear and come up before the dancers enter to illuminate the stage devoid of action. The lights are white to suggest a non-theater, or working type atmosphere. These lights fade just before the solo begins. A special spot lights the soloist. She is the first to dance to the music, and at this point the feeling is that the performance has just now begun, with the spotlight to suggest a vaudeville atmosphere. When the other three dancers begin the duet and trio section the general side lighting and overhead strip are brought up in warm colors of red, orange and amber. The lighting is subdued during the beginning of this section and increases from 5-10 during the fast unison section for all four dancers. The sudden intensity of lighting, the tempo of the music, and sharpened movement activity by all four dancers create a high point of the dance during this section. During the final section of the dance the colored lights begin to fade. The second special spotlight is brought up during the final twenty seconds of the dance just as the colored lights have completely faded out. The spot is directed on the set as the last dancer exits and intimates a return of the beginning atmosphere of the dance.

## FRONT LIGHTING



## SIDE LIGHTING



Detail of lighting at each  
leg position:

Two ellipsoidal spotlights  
are attached to free-standing  
pipe. Angle of light beam  
is medium side and low side.

## LIGHTING DETAILS

## FRONT LIGHTING

Floor strip lights (footlights) . . . . . white

## Pipe No. 1:

No. 1 and No. 6 . . . . . flesh pink, Roscolene No. 226  
 No. 2 and No. 5 . . . . . medium pink, Roscolene No. 229  
 No. 3 and No. 4 . . . . . light red, Roscolene No. 221

## Pipe No. 2:

SP Spotlight No. 1 . . . . . white

## Pipe No. 3:

SP Spotlight No. 2 . . . . . white

## Outer rail:

No. 7 and No. 12 . . . . . medium pink, Roscolene No. 229  
 No. 8 and No. 11 . . . . . deep pink, Roscolene No. 231  
 No. 9 and No. 10 . . . . . light red, Roscolene No. 221

## SIDE LIGHTING

## Lower spotlights:

No. 1 and No. 5 . . . . . special lavender, Roscolene No. 242  
 No. 2 and No. 6 . . . . . flesh pink, Roscolene No. 226  
 No. 3 and No. 7 . . . . . medium amber, Roscolene No. 214  
 No. 4 and No. 8 . . . . . orange amber, Roscolene No. 210

## Upper spotlights:

No. 1 and No. 5 . . . . . special lavender, Roscolene No. 242  
 No. 2 and No. 6 . . . . . medium pink, Roscolene No. 229  
 No. 3 and No. 7 . . . . . light red, Roscolene No. 221  
 No. 4 and No. 8 . . . . . orange amber, Roscolene No. 210

## CURTAIN AND LIGHT PLOT

## SECTION I

- Cue 1      Curtain opens slowly on to black stage.
- Cue 2      Floor strip lights 0-10 (approx. 30 sec.).  
Dancers enter at 10 sec. after lights begin to come up.
- Cue 3      Main dancer reaches position on floor slightly left of  
center stage. Floor strip lights fade 10-0 (approx.  
30 sec.).
- Cue 4      Main dancer holds position center stage. SP Spotlight  
No. 1 on dancer 0-10 3 sec. after she takes position  
(approx. 2 sec.). Floor strip lights 0 when dancer  
reaches position.

## SECTION II

- Cue 5      Music begins (approx. 2 sec. after SP Spotlight No. 1  
at 10).
- Cue 6      After 1 min. SP Spotlight 10-0 (approx. 18 sec.) and  
pipe No. 1 and outer rail lights 0-5 (approx. 18 sec.).
- Cue 7      After main dancer runs off stage right (2 sec.) general  
side lights 0-6 (approx. 20 sec.).
- Cue 8      When dancer on stool at center stage gets up and bows,  
general side lights 6-10 (approx. 45 sec.).
- Cue 9      3 dancers hold position as pipe No. 1 and outer rail  
lights 5-10 (approx. 5 sec.).

## SECTION III

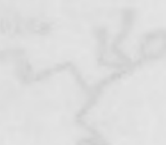
- Cue 10      2 min. after last section begins, pipe No. 1 and outer  
rail lights 10-5 (approx. 1 min.).
- Cue 11      3 min. after last section begins when the 4 dancers are  
downstage right, pipe No. 1 and outer rail lights 5-0,  
and general side lights 10-5 (approx. 1 min.).
- Cue 12      Dancers hold position; general side lights 5-0 (approx.  
20 sec.). SP Spotlight No. 2 0-5 (approx. 20 sec.).

- Cue 13 As last dancer exists stage, music stops and SP spotlight No. 2 5-7 (2 sec.).
- Cue 14 SP spotlight No. 2 on empty stage (approx. 5 sec.).
- Cue 15 Blackout, curtain closes quickly.

Cue 1



Music begins to play  
Dancers enter stage  
from the left.

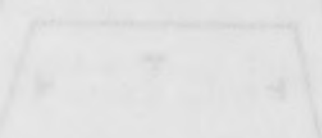


Cue 2



Music speeds up and  
dancers move off stage  
to the right.

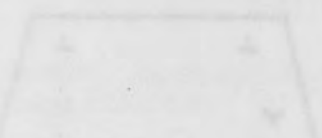
Cue 3



Dancer on stage  
center stage gets  
up and down.



Cue 4



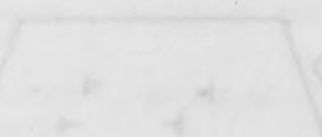
Three dancers hold stand-  
ing position with backs  
to the audience.

Cue 11

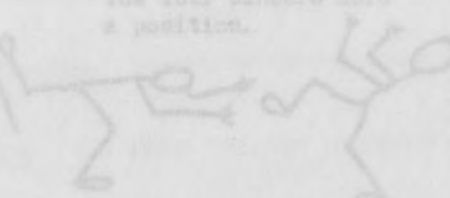


The four dancers are  
grouped facing the diagon-  
al downstage right.

Cue 12



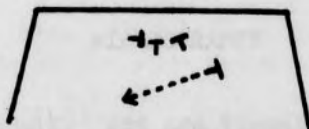
The four dancers hold  
a position.





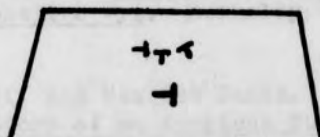
# VISUAL DIAGRAM FOR CURTAIN AND LIGHT PLOT

Cue 3

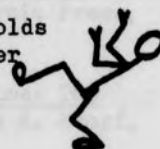


Main dancer moves from  
stage left to stage right.

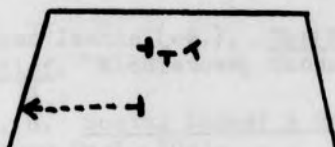
Cue 4



Main dancer holds  
position center  
stage.

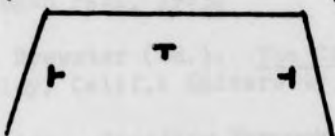


Cue 7

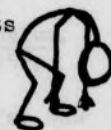


Main dancer runs off stage  
right.

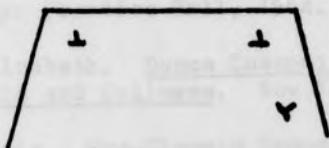
Cue 8



Dancer on stool  
center stage gets  
up and bows.

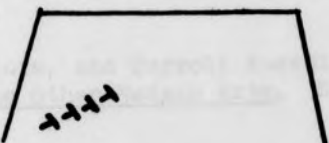


Cue 9



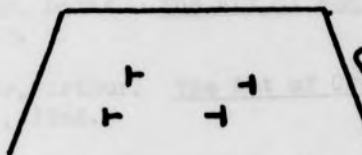
Three dancers hold stand-  
ing position with backs  
to the audience.

Cue 11

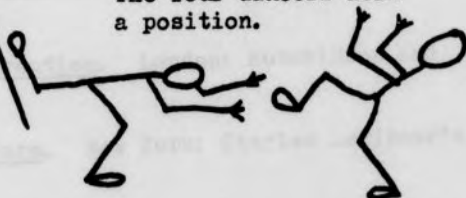


The four dancers are  
grouped facing the diagon-  
al downstage right.

Cue 12



The four dancers hold  
a position.



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